

**ABSTRACT**

An apparatus and method is provided to generate digital audio signals, such as stereo signals, from a multimedia program. The program can be distributed directly through an electronic network, or indirectly by recording the program on a medium such as a DVD or CD. The multimedia program is normally compressed using a standard DVD, MPEG or similar compression protocol. In accordance with the invention, the program is decoded to generate a multimedia output signal and an audio output signal. The multimedia signals can be played immediately or at will on a suitable multimedia device. The audio output signal is compressed, using for instance MP3 or ATRAC3, and then transmitted to an external device for storage as a digital file. The digital file can then be replayed at will.

2000-01-01